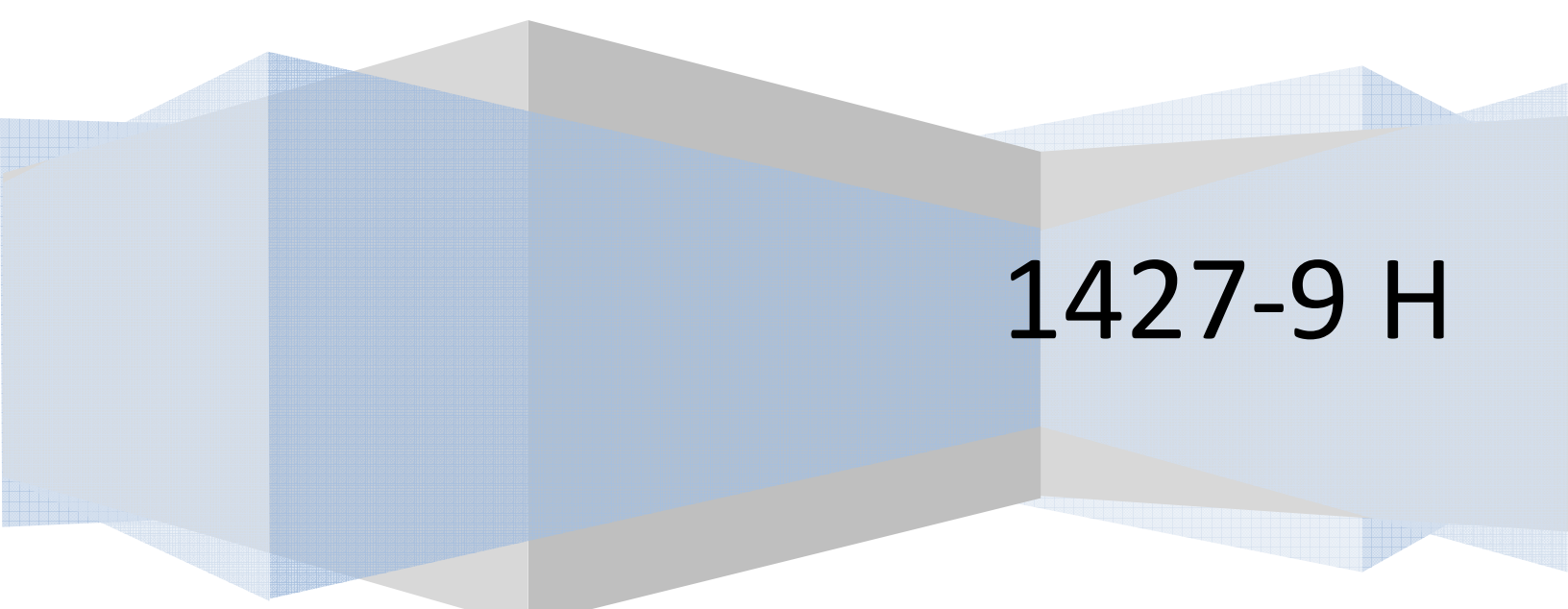


Explanation of the first 7 Narrations in Al-Bukhari's Sahih

A translation of Ibn Hajr's Fath Al-Bari

Abu Maryam (tarjuman.wordpress.com)



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Introduction:

Bismillahirrahmaanirrahim. Ash-Shaikh Al-Imâm Al-Hâfiz Abu 'Abdullâh Muhammad bin Isma'îl bin Ibrâhîm bin Al-Mughhîrah Al-Bukhaari may Allâh Have Mercy to him said:

How was the start of revelation to Allâh's Messenger Sallallahoalaihiwasallam? And the Statement of Allâh: "Verily, We have sent the Revelation to you as We sent the Revelation to Nûh and the Prophets after him." (V.4:163).

Ibn Hajr's Fathul Baari:

Why did Bukhaari not start his book with praise of Allah (الحمد) or the testimony (الشهادة) ?

This is because the hadith which recommends Hamd and Tashahhud before every important act and sermon is not free from criticism and even if it were authentic, it is not related to written documents. This is supported by the fact that the Prophet sallallahoalaihiwasalam in his letter to kings and in his judgements that were written down started them with Bismillah only and not with Hamd etc. as we will see later in this same book.

Many of Bukhaari's companions, teachers and the teachers of his teachers like Maalik, Abdur Razzaq, Ahmed etc. did not start their famous books with anything but Bismillah (as Bukhari has done here).

Bukhaari saying : "Start of Revelation"

Imam Bukhaari uses this terminology a lot in naming chapters e.g. "Start of Haidh (menses)", "Start of Aathan (Call to Prayers)", "Start of Creation" etc. It means not how the revelation started but the manner of revelation and everything related to it.

Bukhaari saying : Statement of Allah: "Verily, We have sent the Revelation to you as We sent the Revelation to Nûh and the Prophets after him."

The relation of this verse to the naming of this chapter is clear in that the manner of revelation to our Prophet sallallahualaihiwasalam matches the manner of revelation to the messengers before him, and in also in the fact that the revelation started to all messengers by means of dreams first, as Abu Nu'aim narrated in his book Al-Dalaail with a hasan chain of narration from Alqamah, the companion of Ibn Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him.

Hadith No. 1:

Abdullah bin Alzubair Alhumaidi narrated to us , he said Sufyan (bin 'Uyainah) narrated to us, he said Yahya bin Sa'eed Alansaari said Muhammad bin Ibraahim Altaimi informed me that he heard 'Alqamah bin Waqqas Allaithi say that I heard 'Umar bin Al-Khattab radhiallahuanhu on the pulpit (minbar), he said : I heard Allâh's Prophet sallallahualaihiwasalam saying, "The deeds are only upon the intentions and every person has only what he has intended for. So whoever's emigration was to get the world (i.e. worldly benefits) or for a woman to marry her, then his emigration will be for what he emigrated for."

[Muhsin Khan's translation with editing].

Ibn Hajr's Fathul Baari:

His saying : "Alhumaidi narrated to us"

Alhumaidi is a relative of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasalam and also his wife Khadijah (from her clan). It seems as if Bukhaari was acting upon the saying of putting the Quraish forward, so he started his book with a narration from a Qurashi. And there is another reason in narrating from Alhumaidi in the first chapter of "Start of Revelation" in that Alhumaidi is a Meccan, like his teacher Sufyan bin 'Uyainah, because the Revelation started in Mecca and then the next narration that Bukhaari brings in this chapter is from Maalik who is a Medinite, because the Revelation then transferred to Medinah.

Relation of this Hadith to the name of the Chapter "Start of Revelation"

Ibn Najjar said: "The naming of the Chapter has a relation to the verse

(4:163) and this hadith both, because Allah Revealed to the messengers and then to Muhammad sallallahu alaihi wasalam that the deeds are upon intentions, as the Saying of Allah “”And they were not commanded except to worship Allah sincerely for His sake only” (98:5)”. Abul ‘Aaliyah said “In the Saying of Allah “He has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Noah” (42:13) and He ordained for them sincerity in His worship”. Others said this hadith is related to the name of the chapter because the Revelation started as intention, as Allah created the nature of Muhammad sallallahu alaihi wasalam upon Tawheed and hatred of idols. Still others said the relationship of this hadith to the chapter is that just before being granted prophethood the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam emigrated towards Allah in seclusion in the cave of Hira.

The great merits of this Hadith

Imams Abdurrahmaan Almahdi, Alshaf’ie, Ahmed bin Hanbal, Ali bin Almadini, Abu Dawood, Altirmizi, Aldaraqutni and Alkinaanani are agreed that this hadith is a third of Islaam, or at least one-fourth of it and Albaihaqi explained this by saying that a man’s effort in a deed occurs with his heart, tongue and organs, so intention is one third of it and the most important part of that effort. Alshaf’ie said it contains numerous branches of knowledge.

Who else narrated this Hadith

All the famous scholars narrated this hadith in their books except Maalik in his Al-Muwatta, but Bukhari, Muslim and Alnasai narrated it from the route of Maalik. From ‘Umar all the way upto Yahya bin Saeed there is only one chain of narrators. From Yahya onwards scores of chains exist as many people narrate this hadith from him. There are other chains which are not authentic. So in terminology of hadith, this is a fard (singular) type of narration. But the meaning of this narration is found in numerous ahadith, so it can be said that is mutawaatir ma’nawi (continuous, i.e. numerous narrations which can give the same meaning but not the same words).

His saying: "On the pulpit"

That is the pulpit of Almasjid Alnabavi in Medinah.

His saying: "The deeds are only upon the intentions"

Both deeds and intentions are plural, i.e. each deed is upon its intention. Alkhoobi said it seems as if he pointed out that intentions are of several types just like deeds are of different types, e.g. a person may do a deed intending from it reward from Allah or to get what He promised or to save himself from His punishment. In other narrations, deeds are plural but intention is singular, like the narration of Maalik in Sahih Albukhari in "Book of Faith" (Eemaan) that "The deeds are upon the intention", because the deeds are performed by many different organs so they are plural but intention is based upon sincerity which is one. And there is also a narration in Bukhari which mentions both in singular "The action is upon the intention". Here the "deeds" are the "deeds of worship".

His saying: "upon the intentions"

"Upon" either means that the intention is integral part of the deed or that it is the reason for doing the deed. It is said that the meaning is "the deeds are judged based upon the intentions" or "the deeds are completed upon the intentions" or "the deeds are validated based upon the intentions" or "No deed is complete or valid except with the intention" or "the deeds follow the intentions".

Also the deeds are the actions performed by the organs including the words of the tongue and actions of the heart.

His saying: "and every person has only what he has intends"

Al-Qurtubi said "In this is evidence that intention and sincerity are preconditions for the deeds", and he was inclined to consider 'making the intention' highly recommended (mu'akkadah). Others said the two sentences

“the deeds are only upon the intentions” and “every person has only what he intends for” imply different connotations. The former sentence tells us that the deed follows and accompanies the intention, so the judgment is based upon that. The latter tells us that the doer gets nothing except what he intended for. Ibn Daqeeq Al-Eid said “The second sentence implies that whoever intends something gets it, i.e. if he does the deed with its preconditions or even if he is prevented from doing it by a legally acceptable excuse. And whatever he does not intend for, he does not get it.” By saying “whatever he does not intend for” he meant that no intention is made specifically or generally. For if he does not intend something specific, but he had a general intention which covers what he did not specifically intend for, then the scholars have differed in this instance and numerous cases can be derived from it. Sometimes a person doing a specific deed also gets what he was not specifically intending for, e.g. a person entering a mosque prays the obligatory (fardh) or recommended (raatibah) prayers before sitting, then he has indeed performed the ‘tahiyyatul masjid’ (two units of prayers recommended before sitting for the one who enters the mosque) whether he specifically intended to pray tahiyyatul masjid or not, because the reason behind tahiyyatul masjid has been achieved and that is not to sit before praying two units. And this is different from the case of the person who bathes on a Friday because of ritual impurity (janabah). The stronger position is that this person is not considered having done the recommended Friday bath, because the Friday bath is a worship not just cleansing, so it is a must to have a specific intention for that, and this is different from tahiyyatul masjid, where a general intention was sufficient. And Allah knows best. Al-Nawawi said, “the second sentence (“every person has only what he intends for”) tells us that it is a precondition to make a specific intention, e.g. the one who has to pray a missed prayer, it is not sufficient that he intends only to pray a missed prayer but he should specify whether it is Zuhr or ‘Asr prayers.” This is obviously when he has to pray more than one missed prayers. Ibn Sum’aani said “This (“every persons has only what he intends”) means that deeds which are not worship are not rewarded (by Allah) except when the doer intends by it closeness to Allah, like eating with the intention of gaining strength to obey Allah”. Other scholars said “It means that making the intention cannot be delegated. This is the original principle. The

cases in which e.g. the wali (guardian) makes the intention for the child (in Hajj and 'Umrah pilgrimages) are exceptions to the original principle." Ibn Abdil Salaam said "The first sentence ("the deeds are only upon the intentions") is meant to specify what are counted as (valid) deeds, and the second ("every person has only what he intends for") shows what are the consequences of those deeds. It also implies that intention is a precondition only in those worships which are themselves distinguishable (from non-worship acts). So the deeds of worship which are clearly distinguishable as such e.g. remembrance (Dhikr), invocations (D'uaa) and recitation (tilaawah) are deducible from the manner in which they are performed". It is obvious that this is for the original manner for worship, so that if these worships happen as a habit e.g. saying "Subhanallah" in surprise/praise, then the above is not applicable. Besides doing Dhikr is done with an intention of seeking closeness to Allah, then the reward is more.

So, in sum every deed (of worship) needs an intention. This includes the deed of not doing something! That is, if a person leaves a certain deed by stopping himself from doing it, fearing the punishment from Allah, then indeed he is rewarded for stopping himself from doing it. This is unlike the person who gives no weight to the enormity of disobeying Allah, and leaves doing that deed without any intention.

His saying: "So whoever's emigration was to get the world"

Imam Bukhari's leaving out (kharm) part of the hadith "So whoever emigrated for Allah and His Prophet, his emigration is for Allah and his Prophet"

Imam Bukhari while narrating this hadith here, narrated it without the words above, and left out the above mentioned words. The complete narration, found elsewhere in the Sahih of Bukhari is "The deeds are only upon the intentions and every person has only what he has intended for. So whoever's emigration was to get the world (i.e. worldly benefits) or for a woman to marry her, then his emigration will be for what he emigrated for. And whoever emigrated for Allah and His Prophet, his emigration is for Allah and his Prophet", as in the chapter (Baab) on Hijrah. This can have several

explanations. Firstly, some scholars said that by narrating this hadith as the first Hadith in his book, Imam Bukhari placed it as a preface for his book, like many other authors who write prefaces to explain their methodology in their books. So Bukhari prefaced his book by specifying his intention, and referring the sincerity of that intention to Allah, so that if it is in Allah's Knowledge that he wanted to earn worldly gains from this work, then Allah will Judge him according to what he intended. So, he knowingly left out the other part of the narration "whoever emigrated for Allah and His Prophet..." to free himself of self-praise and self-purification, because here the author is telling us about his intention in writing this book.

Also it is Bukhari's views it permissible to narrate part of the hadith and to narrate the meaning of the actual words, both of which he applied here. It is Bukhari's way to sometimes narrate a narration by leaving out some words, even if he leaves out the words from the middle of the narration. It is his methodology that if he has the same text with more than one chain of narrators, then he mentions the text with one chain at one place and with a different chain at another place (i.e. in another chapter). This is if the narration reaches the level of authenticity according to standard that Bukhari set for a hadith to be authentic in his Sahih, but if it is not upto the standard he has set, then he mentions it without a chain or leaving out part of the chain (mu'allaq). This he does either with definiteness like saying "He said such and such", if it is authentically reported but not up to the standard he has set up, or passively (tamreedh) like saying "It is narrated that he said such and such", if it has some weakness. And if he has a text with only one chain of narrators (i.e up to the standard set by him), he takes liberty in reporting the text, reporting part of it in one place and part in another place according to the requirement of the chapter he has named. It is very rare that he would mention one narration with the same text and same chain, completely at more than one places in his Sahih. A scholar I (Ibn Hajar) met told me he took care to count the places in Bukhari where he mentions the complete text with the same chain at more than one places, and he was able to count them as about twenty places only!

His saying: "whoever's emigration":

Hijrah (emigration) literally means to leave some thing and "emigrate to

something” means to transfer to that thing from some other thing. And in Islamic law it means to “leave something Allah has forbidden from”. And emigration in Islam occurred in two forms: firstly in the transfer from a place of fear to a place of peace, as in the emigration to Abyssinia and the earlier part of emigration from Mecca to Medina, and secondly in the transfer from a place of disbelief to a place of Islam like the emigration to Medina after the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam was established in Medina. After the conquest of Mecca, this latter form was not limited to Medina, but became general to all places of Islam.

His saying: “or a woman”:

Even though, the woman may be counted as coming under the generality of the word “the world” i.e worldly benefits, but she is mentioned separately because the fitnah (trial) from her (upon men) is greater and so special care was taken to warn in this regard. Some people say that the reason for this hadith is a certain instance in which a person emigrated to Medina to marry a woman called Qaylah Umm Qays, so due to that the man was called “Muhajir Umm Qays” (emigrant to Umm Qays), from the saying of Ibn Masood narrated by Al-Tabarani, but it is not clear whether this was the specific reason for the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam saying this hadith.

His saying: “then his emigration will be for what he emigrated for”:

This does not mean that the one who emigrates for marriage or worldly benefits, then his emigration is invalid or blameworthy completely in all cases. For example a person who emigrates intending marriage and leaving the place of disbelief both, then his reward would be less than the one who emigrated only for the sake of Allah. The one who is to be reproached is the one who emigrates purely for the sake of the woman. Similarly a person who intends from his emigration marriage, but as a means of gaining Allah’s reward by remaining chaste, is also rewarded. An example of this is that Umm Sulaym (Anas’s mother) embraced Islam before Abu Talhah. When he proposed her, she promised to marry him if he too embraced Islam. So he did that and the dowry (sadaaq/mahr) between them was the Islam of Abu Talhah. This was narrated by Al-Nasai. It can be said that Abu Talhah wanted to embrace Islam of his own will and added to it the intention to

marry, similar to the one who intends from his fasting (sawm) worship and fitness both!

Fiqh (understanding) of the Hadith:

This narration can be used as an evidence to derive the following jurisprudence:

1. It is not permissible to do a deed before knowing its ruling, because it is not correct to intend doing something except after knowing its ruling.
2. The person who does not know, is not held accountable, because the intention is made if the thing intended for is known which this person does not intend for since he does not know it.
3. A person, who intends for a voluntary fast later in the day, gets the reward from the time he made the intention, as this is what this hadith implies. But it can be said that he gets the full reward with evidence from another hadith “Whoever catches up one rak’ah (unit) of prayer (with congregation), indeed gets it (i.e. the superiority of the congregational prayer over singular one)”. This is due to the Bounty of Allah.
4. If a trustworthy person was present in a gathering and then narrated from that gathering something they all listened to, then this does not harm his reputation as being truthful and trustworthy, even if no one else present at that gathering narrated what he mentioned. Here ‘Alqamah is the only one who is authentically narrated what ‘Umar said on the pulpit.
5. Whatever cannot be counted as a “deed”, then the intention is not a precondition for it. For example the combining of two prayers is not a “deed” in itself, the deed is praying (salaat). This is substantiated by the fact that the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam combined the prayers in Tabouk and did not inform those praying behind beforehand.
6. If multiple actions result in a single class of deeds, then intention can be made only for that class of deeds. For example a person may free a slave as penalty (kaffarah, this is the class of deeds) but does not specifically intend due to what sin (the reason requiring this class of deeds) he is doing that penalty, because the hadith means “every intention is based upon its intention”. The intended deed here is to do what frees oneself of the obligatory penalty and that does not need specifying the reason that obligated the penalty. So if the person knows he has to pay a penalty but does not remember why he has to do it, it is sufficient that he pays the penalty without specifying the reason that obligated it.

7. If the reason for the hadith was the story of “Muhajir Umm Qays” (mentioned above) then this means that the mentioning of worldly benefits was something extra to generalize the warning. Thus sometimes a specific reason results in a specific ruling, but that ruling then can be generalized, and so the general meaning of the text can be used even if the original reason was something specific.

Other instances of this hadith in Bukhari:

More discussion of this hadith will come in “Kitaabul Eeman”, when Bukhari narrates it again. [It can be found as hadith no.1, 54, 2529, 3898, 5070, 6689 and 6953 in Bukhari, Darus Salaam publication with Fathul Baari. Alhamdolillah, we have finished the discussion on Hadith no.1].

Hadith No. 2:

Abdullah bin Yousuf narrated to us, he said Malik informed us from Hisham bin 'Urwah from his father from 'Aisha, the mother of the believers, may Allah be Pleased with her that Al-Harith bin Hisham asked Allah's Apostle sallallahu alaihi wasallam "O Allah's Apostle! How does the revelation come to you?" Allah's Apostle replied, "At times, it comes to me like the ringing of a bell, this form of revelation is the hardest of all upon me and then it stops from me and I have grasped from him (the angel) what he said. Sometimes the angel comes in the form of a man and talks to me and I grasp what he says." 'Aisha, may Allah be Pleased with her said: And indeed I saw him when the revelation was coming down on him on a very cold day, and noticed the sweat dripping from his forehead.

[Muhsin Khan's Translation with edition.]

Fathul Baari:

His saying: "Abdullah bin Yousuf"

Yahya bin Ma'een classified him as the one of the most reliable narrators in Al-Muwatta with regards to memory.

His saying: "mother of the believers"

This is because of the respect they have to be shown and because they cannot be married to anyone (after the death of the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam).

His saying: "Al-Harith bin Hisham"

He is the brother of Abu Jahl. He embraced Islam at the conquest of Mecca and was martyred in the conquests of Shaam.

Even though 'Aisha did not specify clearly that Al-Harith told her this hadith

directly, but such a practice amongst the Sahabah (maraseel al-sahabah) is acceptable, and the majority (of scholars) regard the chain as connected in this case.

His saying: "How does the revelation come to you?"

It may mean that the question is about the characteristics of the revelation itself, about the characteristics of the angel carrying it or about revelation generally. This hadith is related to the verse that Bukhari mentioned at the beginning of the Book of Revelation: "Verily, We have sent the Revelation to you as We sent the Revelation to Nûh and the Prophets after him." And so this hadith which shows the characteristics of the angel carrying the revelation and the hadith of deeds before it, which shows the characteristics of the revelation itself points to the fact that generally the revelation to the Prophets is similar.

His saying: "At times"

In another narration in the Book of Creation in Al-Sahih of Bukhari, it is mentioned that in both cases angel, i.e. Jibreel used to bring the revelation. Other manners of revelation and different characteristic of the angel carrying it are mentioned in various narrations. But they don't negate this hadith. For example it is narrated from 'Umar that when the revelation was revealed to the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam, an unintelligible sound like the buzzing of a bee could be heard near him (Tirmizi). But there is no contradiction with this hadith as the buzzing was heard by those around him and the ringing of the bell was perceived by the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam himself. It is noteworthy that the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam did not limit the manner of the revelation and the characteristic of the angel to the two cases only, however these were the most common forms.

His saying: "like the ringing of a bell"

Like the ringing of a bell it was not understandable at the first instance, but understanding comes gradually.

It is possible that it means the voice of the angel or the clapping of his wings.

His saying: "hardest of all upon me"

These means that all forms of revelation were hard upon him and this was the hardest of all of them upon him. It includes all revelation whether from the Quraan or otherwise (Sunnah).

His saying: "and I have grasped from him (the angel) what he said" and "and I grasp what he says."

In the first instance (ringing of the bell), he used the past tense "and I have grasped from him (the angel) what he said", meaning that the understanding of what was revealed to him occurred gradually, before the angel left him. In the second instance (angel appearing as a man), he used the present tense "I grasp" which shows that the understanding of the revelation occurred as the angel spoke.

His saying: "Aisha said"

This saying is with the same chain as the hadith itself. If the author wanted to show that there is a different chain for this saying without mentioning that chain itself (ta'leeq), he would have said "And 'Aisha said".

His saying: "dripping"

It is derived from the Arabic word used for cutting of a vein that spills the blood. Here it is used to show that the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam perspired profusely. Similarly her saying "on a very cold day" also shows the great hardship he faced at the time of the revelation. Albaihiqi adds to this narration "Aldalaail" that if the revelation would come to him and he was mounted on his she-camel, he would hit her with the rein from the burden of the revelation.

Fiqh (understanding) of the Hadith:

1. To ask something to pacify the heart, does not harm one's belief (See Al-Quraan 2:260).
2. It is permissible to ask about the state of the prophets at times of revelations or even generally.
3. If the answer to a question is of several sub-classes, the one answering may begin his answer with words that require detail. (Here he started with "At times" which means there is further detail to the answer).

Other instances of this hadith in Bukhari:

We have Alhamdulillah finished explanation of Hadith no. 2. [It can be found as hadith no.2 and 3215 in Bukhari, Darus Salaam publication with Fathul Baari].

Hadith No. 3

Yahya bin Bukayr narrated to us, he said Al-Laith narrated from Uqail and he from Ibn Shihab and he from ‘Urwah bin Al-Zubayr who narrated from ‘Aishah, the mother of believers, that she said: The revelation first started to Allah's Apostle sallallahu alaihi wasallam as good (true) dreams in his sleep. He did not see a dream, except that it became true as (clear as) the morning light. Then seclusion was made dear to him, and he used to go in seclusion to the cave of Hira where he used to do “Tahannuth” – and that means worship- continuously for many nights before returning to his family. He used to take with him the provisions for the stay and then come back to (his wife) Khadija to take his provisions like-wise again, till the truth (revelation) came to him while he was in the cave of Hira. The angel came to him and said “Read”. The Prophet said, " ‘I cannot read’. The angel got hold of me and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it any more. He then released me and said, ‘Read’, and I replied, 'I cannot read.' Thereupon he caught me again and pressed me a second time till I could not bear it any more. He then released me and said, ‘Read’ but again I replied, 'I do not know how to read (or what shall I read)?' Thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said, 'Read in the name of your Lord, who has created; has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous.'" (96:1-3) Then Allah's Apostle returned with it (the Revelation), with his heart beating severely. Then he went to Khadija bint Khuwailid, may Allah be pleased with her and said, "Cover me! Cover me!" They covered him till his fear was over and after that he told her everything that had happened and said, "I fear for my self." Khadija replied, "Never! By Allah, Allah will never bring grief to you (in another narration: never disgrace you). You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones."

Khadija then went with him to Waraqa bin Naufal bin Asad bin 'Abdul 'Uzza, her paternal uncle's son, who, during the pre-Islamic Period became a Christian and used to write the writing with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allah wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight. Khadija said to Waraqa, "Listen to your nephew, O son of my uncle (father's brother)!" Waraqa asked, "O my brother's son! What have you seen?"

Allah's Apostle described whatever he had seen. Waraqa said, "This is the same one who keeps the secrets (angel Jibreel) whom Allah had sent down to Moses. I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would turn you out." Allah's Apostle asked, "Will they drive me out?" Waraqa replied, "Yes. Any man who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till that day (when you will be turned out) then I would support you strongly." But Waraqa did not live long after that and died and the Revelation also paused for a while.

[Muhsin Khan's translation with editing. Editing is made to help in explanation of the texts, by making the translation more literal.]

Ibn Hajr's Fathul Baari:

A brief word about the narrators

Yahya is actually Yahya bin Abdillah bin Bukayr, but he is more famously attributed to his grandfather, i.e. why Bukhari said "Yahya bin Bukayr". Similarly Ibn Shihab is known as Ibn Shihab Al-Zuhri, but his actual name is Muhammad and Ibn Shihab is his grandfather's father, but he is famous by that name. Abdullah bin Bukayr is one of the most trustworthy narrators from Al-Laith and similarly 'Uqail is one of the most trustworthy narrators from Ibn Shihab.

His saying: "The revelation"

"Good dreams" mean "true" dreams, as in another narration in Sahih Al-Bukhari. These dreams serves as a preliminary to the revelation in the state of being awake.

His saying: "morning light"

This means the dreams used to become true as clearly and as doubtless as the morning-light.

His saying: “made dear to him”

That is, made dear to him by Allah. Seclusion was made dear to him, since it helps the heart in concentrating. Hira’ is a famous mountain in Mecca.

His saying: “Tahannuth”

It is the same as “Tahannuf”, as in the narration of Ibn Hisham in his book “Al-Seerah”. The Arabs often replace the letter “faa” with the letter “thaa”. It means to follow the “Haneefeeyah” i.e the religion of Ibrahim.

His saying: “and that means worship”

This saying is from Ibn Shihab, as is clear from another report in Sahih Al-Bukhari. In terminology of hadith the words of a narrator, which are not part of the text itself but occur alongside it, are called ‘mudraj’.

His saying: “continuously for many nights”

The period of seclusion is known to be one month, and this month used to be Ramadan, as Ibn Ishaq narrated.

His saying: “till the truth came to him”

Here, the revelation is called “the truth”, as it is from Allah. In another narration in Sahih Al-Bukhari, it is mentioned “till the truth came to him suddenly”. In Sahih Muslim it is narrated that ‘Aisha narrated from the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam that “I did not see him (Jibreel) in the form he was created except twice.” This is explained by Imam Ahmad in the hadeeth of Ibn Mas’ood that the first time was when the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam asked Jibreel to show him his true form and the second time was at the event of Mi’raaj (miraculous ascent). In the Hadith of ‘Aisha in Tirmizi it is mentioned that once it was near the Sidrat-ul-Muntaha (a lote tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass) and the other time was in Ajyaad (a place in Mecca). This means that there is a possibility that when the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam saw him in the cave of Hira’ , he did not see Jibreel

in his complete form (which was gigantic). In the narration of Sulayman Al-Taimee in his collection, it is mentioned that when Jibreel left the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam after teaching him these verses (96:1), he remained a bit doubtful. Then Jibreel came in front of him in his form and he saw a giant.

His saying: “Ma ‘ana bi qari’ (I cannot read)”

Al-Teebi said it means “I cannot read at all”. It is also possible that the Arabic word “ma”, which in this particular grammatical syntax means negative, may also give an inquisitive meaning. This is because in the narration of Maghaazi of Abu Alaswad it is mentioned “how should I read” and in the narration of Ibn Ishaq “What should I read?” . And Allah knows best.

His saying: “Pressed me”

That is squeezed me. It also means “suffocated me”. In the hasan narration of Musnad Abe Dawood Al-Tayalisi “he caught me by my throat”.

His saying: “till I could not bear it any more”

Even though the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam did not mention this sentence after the third pressing, but it is proven elsewhere in Sahih Al-Bukhari.

His saying: “I feared for myself”

This was a state of fear. Scholars have explained it in different ways, the most correct of which are three, i.e. a) death resulting from fear b) illness c) perpetuation of the sickness.

His saying: “and Khadija said, “Never” ”

She praised the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam as having the foundations of all the best manners, because kindness can be shown to relatives or strangers, physically or with money, to the one who is able to take care of his affairs or one who cannot and is dependent upon others, and all these characteristics are contained in her praise for him.

This hadith shows the permissibility of calming a person in distress by mentioning what may calm him and ease his stress. It also shows the permissibility that the person in distress may confide in someone whose advice and sincerity he trusts.

His saying: “(Waraqah) used to write Hebrew. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew ”

In the narration (in Sahih Al-Bukhari) of Yoonus and Ma'mar, “and wrote from the Gospel in Arabic”. In the narration of Muslim (and also another narration in Sahih Al-Bukhari), “he used to write Arabic”. All the narrations are correct, since Waraqah knew both Hebrew and Arabic. This is in contrast to Khadijah's calling him “O son of my uncle” as reported by Al-Bukhari here, while in Muslim she is reported as saying “O uncle” and this is a mistake (from one of the narrators), as even though it is linguistically correct to call him an uncle to show respect to him, but the fact remains that the event happened only once and the source of the words (Khadija) was also singular and it is not likely that she said it twice. So, the correct version of her words is “O son of my uncle”, as this what her actual relationship to him is. But our methodology in combining the words of Bukhari and Muslim in the words “Hebrew” and “Arabic” earlier and declaring both correct, because these are the words of the narrator describing Waraqah, and since the sources of these words in this case are multiple (i.e. the narrators), it is possible to cater for different words. This (important) rule applies to all such instances (in the science of hadith).

Khadija introduces the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam as “son of your brother (nephew)”, because the number of ancestors that Waraqah had between himself and Qusai bin Kilaab is the same as the number of ancestors that the father of the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam had between hislef and Qusai. So this was a sort of brotherhood between the two. It is

also possible that she said this to Waraqa to show respect to him because of his advanced age.

His saying: “(Waraqa said) what do you see?”

In the narration of Abu Nau’aim’s Al-Dalail with a hasan chain of narrators upto ‘Abdullah bin Shaddad it is mentioned that Khadija had already informed Waraqa of what the prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam had seen.

His saying: "This is the same one who keeps the secrets (angel Jibreel) whom Allah had sent down to Moses"

It is interesting that he said “to Moses” and not “to Jesus”, in spite of the fact that Waraqa was a Christian. This maybe because the Torah of Prophet Moses was given comprised of much legislation as opposed to the Gospel of Prophet Jesus, and since there was much divine legislation in the revelation sent to the Prophet Muhammad sallallahualaihiwasallam, it was more apt to mention Moses here. Or, it may be from the perspective that Moses was sent with punishment to the Pharaoh (Fir’aun) and his associates, as opposed to Jesus who was not. This is similar to the punishment met out to Abu Jahl, the Pharaoh of this nation and his associates at the battle of Badr, by the Prpohet sallallahualaihiwasallam. However, in the narration of Abu Nu’aim in his book Dalaail Al-Nubuwwah with a hasan chain of narrators, it is mentioned that when Khadija first came to Waraqa and told him herself of the events of the cave, he said “If you have told me the truth, then indeed the Namoos (one who keeps the secrets) of Jesus comes to him (the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam), about whom the Banu Israel don't teach their children”. So, this means that when he spoke to Khadija, he said “Namoos of Jesus”, because of his Christianity, and when he spoke to the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam he said “Namoos of Moses”, because of the reasons mentioned above.

His saying: “I wish I were young”

He wished to be young to strongly support the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam and to show how firmly he believed the Prophet

sallallahualaihiwasallam.

His saying: “Any man who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility”

In another narration in Sahih Al-Bukhari in the Book of Tafseer, it is mentioned “he is annoyed” instead of “treated with hostility”. Waraqa mentioned the reason for his imminent expulsion was going to be his call to leave their hereditary beliefs, as Waraqa knew from the sacred books that his nation would not accept this call and this will lead to hostility. This shows that the person giving an answer should mention the reason/evidence for his answer, if it is required.

His saying: “But Waraqa did not live”

He died a few days later. A word about the pause in revelation mentioned at the end: In some narrations it is mentioned that this pause (between the revelation of “Read...” and “Al-Mudaththir”) was three years or six months less than three years. But this is opposed by the narration from Ibn ‘Abbas that this pause was only several days (and this is what Ibn Hajar affirms), and more on this topic will come when we reach Book of Interpretation of Dreams in Sahih Al-Bukhari later, if Allah wills.

Other instances of this hadith in Bukhari:

We have Alhamdulillah finished explanation of Hadith no. 3. [It can be found as hadith no.3, 3392, 4953, 4955, 4956, 4957 and 6982 in Bukhari, Darus Salaam publication with Fathul Baari].

Hadith No. 4

Ibn Shihaab said: And Abu Salamah bin Abdir Rahman informed me that Jabir bin 'Abdullah Al-Ansari said - while talking about the period of pause in revelation- reporting the speech of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam "While I was walking, I heard a voice from the sky. I looked up and saw the same angel who had visited me at the cave of Hira' sitting on a chair between the sky and the earth. I got afraid of him and came back home and said, 'Wrap me (in blankets).' And then Allah revealed: 'O you (i.e. Muhammad)! wrapped up in garments!' Arise and warn (the people against Allah's Punishment)' ... up to 'and desert the idols.' (74: 1-5) After this the revelation started coming strongly, frequently and regularly."

Abdullah bin Yusuf and Abu Saaleh did *mutabi'ah* (a terminological term in the science of Hadith, lit. "followed up") of Yahya bin Bukayr and Hilal bin Raddad did his *mutabi'ah* in his narration from Al-Zuhri. Yunus and Ma'mar said "the flesh between his neck and shoulders."

[Muhsin Khan's translation with editing.]

Fathul Baari by Ibn Hajr:

His saying: Ibn Shihaab said: And Abu Salamah informed me

The word "And" is used to show that this narration is connected to the previous narration, as if Ibn Shihaab is saying: "Urwah informed me this and Abu Salamah informed me that". So the person who thinks that Imaam Al-Bukhaari narrated this hadith with an incomplete chain (ta'leeq) is mistaken. In fact, it is with the same chain of narration upto Ibn Shihaab Al-Zuhri as the previous hadith. This narration shows that the Surah Al-Mudaththir was revealed after the Surah Iqra' of the Quraan.

His saying: I got afraid from him

This shows that the fright he had from the angel's first visit did not leave him completely and left him gradually.

In his book "Al-Taarikh", Imam Bukhari narrated the same hadith with the

same chain of narrators, but added in the end that ‘Urwah said: “Khadija died before prayers (salaah) became obligatory, so the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam said: ‘I saw a house (in paradise) carved out of pearl for Khadija, in which there is no noise nor tiredness’ “.

His saying : did mutabi’ah

In the narration of Abdullah bin Yusuf from Al-Laith, which Al-Bukhari himself narrates in the story of Moses, we find that Al-Zuhri (Ibn Shihab) says explicitly that he heard the hadith directly from ‘Urwah.

His saying: Abu Saleh

This narration is narrated by Ya’qoob bin Sufyan in his book “Tarikh”

His saying: and Hilal bin Raddad did his mutabi’ah

This narration is found in “Al-Zuhriyyat” by Al-Dhuhali.

His saying: Yunus and Ma’mar said “the flesh between his neck and shoulders”

That is Yunus bin Yazeed Al-Ailee and Ma’mar bin Rashid narrated the same hadith from Al-Zuhri and all words are the same as Al-Aqeeli (see the chain of the hadith no. 3) except that these two said “with the flesh between his neck and shoulders palpitating” instead of “with his heart beating severely”. The two narrations are equivalent because both show the fright he got from the visit of the angel.

Other instances of this Hadith is Sahih Al- Bukhari

This hadith appears as hadith no. 4, 3238, 4922, 4923, 4924, 4925, 4926, 4954, 6214 in Darus Salam publishing of Fathul Baari.

Hadith No. 5

Musa bin Isma'eel told us that Abu 'Awanah said that Musa bin Abi 'Aisha said that Sa'eed bin Jubair narrated from Ibn 'Abbas in the explanation of the Statement of Allah: "Move not your tongue concerning (the Quran) to make haste therewith" (75:16), that Ibn 'Abbas said, "Allah's Apostle used to bear the revelation with great trouble and used to move his lips (quickly) with the Revelation." Ibn 'Abbas moved his lips saying, "I am moving my lips in front of you like Allah's Apostle used to move his." Sa'eed (the narrator from Ibn 'Abbas) moved his lips saying: "I am moving my lips like I saw Ibn 'Abbas moving his." Ibn 'Abbas added, "So Allah revealed 'Move not your tongue concerning (the Qur'an) to make haste therewith. It is for us to collect it and to give you (O Muhammad) the ability to recite it (the Qur'an)' (75:16-17) which means that Allah will make him (the Prophet) remember (the portion of the Qur'an which was revealed at that time) by heart and recite it. The Statement of Allah: And 'When we have recited it to you (O Muhammad through Gabriel) then you follow its (Qur'an) recital' (75:18) means 'listen to it and be silent.' And The Statement of Allah 'Then it is for Us (Allah) to make It clear to you' (75:19) means 'Then it is for Us (Allah) to make you recite it. Afterwards, Allah's Apostle used to listen to Jibreel whenever he came and after his departure he used to recite it as Jibreel had recited it."

[Muhsin Khan's translation with editing. Editing is made to help in explanation of the texts, by making the translation more literal.]

Ibn Hajar's Fathul Baari:

Brief introduction of the narrators

Musa bin Isma'eel is one of the great Egyptians scholars of hadith and Abu 'Awanah's name is Al-Wadhdhah bin 'Abdillah Al-Yashkuri (author of Musnad Abi 'Awanah).

His saying : Ibn 'Abbas moved his lips saying, "I am moving my lips in front of you like Allah's Apostle used to move his."

This is an example of further explaining the saying by performing the action. Now, it is apparent that Surah Al-Qayamah (Surah No. 75) was revealed in the early part of the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah sallallahualaihiwasallam in Mecca, and at that time Ibn 'Abbas was not even born, because he was born 3 years before the migration (Hijrah) from Mecca. Hence, it is impossible that Ibn 'Abbas observed this himself. However, it is proven clearly in the narration in Musnad Abi Dawood Al-Tayalisi from Abu 'Awanah that the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam himself informed Ibn 'Abbas about this afterwards.

His saying : " moved his lips" and his saying "So Allah Revealed, 'Move not your tongue' " (75:16)

There is no contradiction between the two statements, as both the tongue and the lips are moved for speech. Indeed, both the organs are mentioned in another narration in Sahih Al-Bukhari in the Book of Tafseer: "used to move his tongue and lips".

Some scholars contend that in the beginning, the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam used to recite along with Jibreel in a hurry to memorize all that was revealed to him and not to forget any part of it, as is clearly mentioned in narrations of Al-Tirmizi, Al-Nasai and Ibn Abi Hatim. However, in the narration of Al-Tabari it is mentioned that the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam "hurried to recite it out of his love for it (the revelation)". So, both reasons prompted him to do so, but he was reassured that he would not forget any part of the Revelation and hence was ordered to remain silent while the Quraan was being revealed to him.

His saying: And the Statement of Allah: 'Then it is for Us (Allah) to make It clear to you' (75:19) means 'Then it is for Us (Allah) to make you recite it'.

It is also possible that it means explanation of the meanings of the words of the Quraan. This can be used as an evidence for delaying the explanation

of a speech after the occurrence of the actual speech. The verses of the Quraan mentioned in this hadith are further explained in the Book of Tafseer in Sahih Al-Bukhari.

Other instances of this hadith in Sahih Al-Bukhari:

We have Alhamdulillah finished the explanation of the 5th hadith. [This hadith appears as hadith no. 5, 3927, 3928, 3929, 5044, 7524].

Hadith No. 6

‘Abdan told us that ‘Abdullah (bin Mubaarak) informed us that Yoonus informed us from Al-Zuhri...another chain...And Bishr bin Muhammad said that ‘Abdullah (bin Mubaarak) informed us that (both) Yoonus and Ma’mar informed us from Al-Zuhri a similarly that he (Al-Zuhri) said that ‘Ubaidullah bin ‘Abdullah informed us me from Ibn ‘Abbas that he said: Allah's Apostle was the most generous of people, and he used to be at his most generous in the month of Ramadan when Jibreel used to meet him. He used to meet him on every night of Ramadan and studied with him the Qur'an. Allah's Apostle was the most generous person, even more generous than the strong uncontrollable wind.

[Muhsin Khan's translation with editing. Editing is made to help in explanation of the texts, by making the translation more literal.]

Ibn Hajar's Fathul Baari:

Brief introduction of the narrators

“Abdaan is ‘Abdullah bin ‘Uthmaan Al-Mirwazi and ‘Ubaidullah is ‘Ubaidullah bin ‘Abdullah bin ‘Utbah bin Mas’ood who is also the narrator in the next hadith.

His saying: “most generous of people”

Generosity is a very praiseworthy characteristic, as in the hadith of Sa’d in Al-Tirmidhi: “Verily, Allah is Generous (Al-Jawwaad) and loves generosity”.

His saying: “studied with him the Quraan”

Since Ramadan is a time when Allah Blesses more favors upon His slaves than in other times, so due to the collective effect of the time (Ramadan) and

the (increased) recitation and listening of the Quraan, his generosity increased in Ramadan more than in other times.

His saying: “even more generous than strong uncontrollable wind”

i.e. his readiness and quickness to do charitable deeds was faster than the speed of the wind, and the adjective “uncontrollable” is used to show that his generosity was very general in benefit to all the needful persons just as the strong, uncontrollable wind affects everything it moves over. This is shown in the narration of Imam Ahmed, where there are additional words at the end of this hadith: “He was not asked anything, except that he gave it (to the one who asked for it)” and this addition is proven by the hadith of Jaabir in Sahih Al-Bukhari “Never was the Prophet asked for a thing (to be given) for which his answer was 'no' ”.

Fiqh (understanding) of the Hadith

Al-Nawawi drew the following beneficial points from this hadith:

1. The encouragement to be generous at all times.
2. To increase charitable deeds in Ramadan and when meeting righteous people.
3. To visit righteous and pious people and repeat the visits, if the visited person does not dislike that.
4. The excellence of reciting the Quraan much in Ramadan.
5. The hadith shows that the Quraan is more meritorious than all other Adhkaar (means of remembering Allah by prescribed invocations etc.)

Relation of this hadith with the chapter

This hadith implicitly shows that the revelation of the Quraan to the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam started in the month of Ramadan. This is because Jibreel used to review with him (in the nights of Ramadan) that part of the Quraan that was revealed to him from the Ramadan of the previous year to the Ramadan of that year, and the year that the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam died he reviewed it with him twice, as is proven in

the hadith of Sahih Al-Bukhari narrated by Fatima, may Allah be pleased with her. So this answers the question as to why this hadith was put in this chapter.

Other instances of this hadith in Bukhari:

We have Alhamdulillah finished the explanation of the 6th hadith. [This hadith appears as hadith no. 6, 1902, 3220, 3554, 4997 in Darus Salam publishing of Fathul Baari]

Hadith No. 7

Abu Al-Yamaan Al-Hakam bin Nafi' told us that Shu'aib informed us from Al-Zuhri, who said that 'Ubaidullah bin 'Abdullah bin 'Utbah bin Mas'ood informed us that 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas informed him that Abu Sufyan bin Harb informed him that Heraclius had sent for him while he was in a camel-caravan(from Quraish). They were merchants doing business in Al-Sham (area comprising preset-day Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan), at the time when Allah's Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam had truce with Abu Sufyan and infidels of Quraish. So they went to Heraclius at Ilya (Jerusalem). Heraclius called them in the court and he had Roman Governors around him. Then he called for them and his translator (translating Heraclius's question) and said, "Who amongst you is the most closely related to this man who claims to be a Prophet?" Abu Sufyan replied, "I am the nearest relative to him (amongst the group)."

Heraclius said, "Bring him (Abu Sufyan) close to me and let his companions come forward and make them stand behind his back." He then told his translator, "Tell them (Abu Sufyan's companions) that I will ask him (Abu Sufyan) about this man (the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam). So if he lies to me, contradict him." Abu Sufyan added, "By Allah! Had I not been afraid of my companions reporting me having lied, I would have lied about him. The first question he asked me was:

'What is his family status amongst you?'

I replied, 'He belongs to a good (noble) family amongst us.'

Heraclius further asked, 'Has anybody amongst you ever claimed the same (i.e. to be a Prophet) before him?'

I replied, 'No.'

He said, 'Was anybody amongst his ancestors a king?'

I replied, 'No.'

Heraclius asked, 'Do the nobles or the weak (and poor) follow him?'

I replied, 'It is the weak who follow him.'

He said, 'Are his followers increasing decreasing?'

I replied, 'They are increasing.'

He then asked, 'Does anybody amongst those who embrace his religion become displeased with the religion and renounce it?'

I replied, 'No.'

Heraclius said, 'Have you ever accused him of telling lies before his claim (to be a Prophet)?'

I replied, 'No. '

Heraclius said, 'Does he betray (break his promises)?'

I replied, 'No. We are at truce with him but we do not know what he will do in it.' I could not find opportunity to insert anything (against the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam) except that.

Heraclius asked, 'Have you ever had a war with him?'

I replied, 'Yes.'

Then he said, 'What was the outcome of the battles?'

I replied, 'Sometimes he was victorious and sometimes we.'

Heraclius said, 'What does he order you to do?'

I said, 'He tells us to worship Allah alone and not to worship anything along with Him, and to renounce all that our ancestors had said. He orders us to pray, to speak the truth, to be chaste and to keep up the ties with our relatives.'

Heraclius said to his translator, "Tell him, I asked you about his family and your reply was that he belonged to a very noble family. In fact all the Prophets come from noble families amongst their respective peoples. I questioned you whether anybody else amongst you claimed such a thing, your reply was in the negative. If the answer had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man was following the previous man's statement. Then I asked you whether anyone of his ancestors was a king. Your reply was in the negative, and if it had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man wanted to take back his ancestral kingdom.

I further asked whether he was ever accused of telling lies before he said what he said, and your reply was in the negative. So I wondered how a person who does not tell a lie about others could ever tell a lie about Allah. I then asked you whether the noble people followed him or the weak. You replied that it was the weak who followed him. And in fact all the Prophets have been followed by this very class of people. Then I asked you whether his followers were increasing or decreasing. You replied that they were increasing, and in fact such is the way of true faith, till it is complete in all respects. I further asked you whether there was anybody, who, after embracing his religion, became displeased with his religion and discarded his religion. Your reply was in the negative, and in fact this is (the sign of) true faith, when its delight enters the hearts and mixes with them completely. I asked you whether he had ever betrayed. You replied in the negative and likewise the Apostles never betray. Then I asked you what he ordered you to do. You replied that he ordered you to worship Allah and Allah alone and not to

worship any thing along with Him and forbade you to worship idols and ordered you to pray, to speak the truth and to be chaste. If what you have said is true, he will very soon occupy this place underneath my feet and I knew it (from the scriptures) that he was going to appear but I did not expect that he would be from you, and if I knew I could reach him, I would go out of my way to meet him and if I were with him, I would certainly wash his feet.'

Heraclius then asked for the letter sent by Allah's Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam which was delivered by Dihya to the Governor of Busra, who forwarded it to Heraclius. He read it and the letter said:

"Bismillahirrahmanirrahim (In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful).

From Muhammad, the slave of Allah and His Prophet, to Heraclius the ruler of Romans. Salaam (Peace) be upon him, who follows the guidance (to the right path). I invite you to Islam, and if you become a Muslim you will be safe, and Allah will double your reward, and if you reject this (invitation of Islam) you will also carry the sin of (misguiding your) subjects. And (Allah said in the Quraan):

'O people of the scripture! Come to a word common to you and us that we worship none but Allah and that we associate nothing in worship with Him, and that none of us shall take others as Lords beside Allah. Then, if they turn away, say: Bear witness that we are Muslims (those who have surrendered to Allah).' (3:64).

Abu Sufyan then added, "When Heraclius had finished his speech and had read the letter, there was a great hue and cry (in the Royal Court) and people raised their voices and we were turned out of the court. Then I told my companions: "The matter of Ibn-Abi-Kabsha (the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasalam) has become so great that even the King of Sons of Yellow (i.e. Romans) is afraid of him". Then I remained sure that he (the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasalam) would be the conqueror in the near future till I embraced Islam (i.e. Allah guided me to it)."

(The sub narrator Al-Zuhri adds) "And Ibn An-Natoor - the Governor of Ilya' (Jerusalem) and a friend of Heraclius- was the head of the Christians of Al-Sham. Ibn An-Natur said that once while Heraclius was visiting Ilya' (Jerusalem), he got up in the morning with a sad mood. Some of the dignitaries of the Roman State asked him why he was in that mood? Heraclius was a foreteller and an astrologer. He

replied, 'At night when I looked at the stars, I saw that the King of those who practice circumcision has become the conqueror. Who are they who practice circumcision?' The people replied, 'Except the Jews nobody practices circumcision and you should not worry about them (the Jews). Just issue orders to kill every Jew present in the country.' While they were discussing it, a messenger sent by the king of Ghassan to convey the news of Allah's Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam to Heraclius was brought in. After having questioned this messenger, he (Heraclius) ordered his men to go and see whether the messenger of Ghassan was circumcised. The people, after seeing him, told Heraclius that he was circumcised. Heraclius then asked him about the Arabs. The messenger replied, 'Arabs also practice circumcision.'

(After hearing that) Heraclius remarked that, "The kingdom of these people has appeared". Heraclius then wrote a letter to his friend in Rome who was as good as Heraclius in knowledge. Heraclius then left for Hims (a city in Syria) and stayed there till he received the reply of his letter from his friend who agreed with him in his opinion about the emergence of the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam and the fact that he was a Prophet. On that Heraclius invited all the heads of the Romans to assemble in his palace at Hims. When they assembled, he ordered that all the doors of his palace be closed. Then he came out and said, 'O Romans! If success is your desire and if you seek right guidance and want your empire to remain then give a pledge of allegiance to this Prophet (i.e. embrace Islam).'

(On hearing the views of Heraclius) the people ran towards the gates of the palace like wild donkeys but found the doors closed. Heraclius realized their hatred towards Islam and when he lost the hope of their embracing Islam, he ordered that they should be brought back in his audience.

(When they returned) he said, 'What I said just now was only to test your steadfastness upon your religion, and I have seen it.' The people prostrated before him and became pleased with him, and this was the end of Heraclius's story (in connection with his being called to Islam). This was narrated by Salih bin Kaisan, Yoonus and Ma'mar from Al-Zuhri.

[Muhsin Khan's translation with editing. Editing is made to help in explanation of the texts, by making the translation more literal.]

Ibn Hajar's Fathul Baari:

Brief introduction of the narrators

1. Shu'aib is Shu'aib bin AbiHamzah bin Dinar Al-Himsi, one of the most reliable reporters from Al-Zuhri.
2. Abu Sufyan is Sakhr bin Harb bin Umayyah bin Abd Al-Shams bin Abd Al-Munaaf.
3. Heraclius is the name of the Roman King and his title was Ceaser.

His saying: while he was in a camel-caravan

They were 30 men in all, as Al-Hakim narrated in Al-Ikleel. Ibn Al-Sakan narrated about 20. In some narrations, one of the members of the caravan is named to be Al-Mughirah bin Shu'bah.

Ibn Sufyan was especially called by Heraclius, because he was the chief of the group.

His saying: at the time when Allah's Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam had truce

i.e. the truce of Al-Hudaibya, and it will be discussed when we come to Book of Military Expeditions (Al-Maghazi) of Sahih Al-Bukhari. This peace treaty occurred in the 6th year after the Emigration to Medina and its duration was agreed to be 10 years. However the infidels broke the treaty, so the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam fought them and Mecca was conquered by the Muslims as a result.

His saying: So they went to Heraclius at Ilya

In Al-Maghazi by Ibn Ishaq it is narrated that Abu Sufyan said, "We (Quraish) were a trade-faring people, and the wars (with Muslims) had consumed us. So, when the truce (of Al-Hudaibya) was in effect, I set out as a merchant to Al-Shaam with a group of other Quraishis. By Allah, I don't know of any man or woman in Mecca, except that they sent with me their fares (for trade).....So Heraclius said to his police-chief, 'Turn Al-Shaam

upside down, until you bring a man from his (the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam's) people, so that I may enquire about him.' By Allah! I and my group were at Gaza (in Palestine), when the police-chief caught us and took us all (to the royal court)."

His saying: Ilya

It is said that Ilya means "House of Allah" (Bait Al-Maqdis in Jerusalem). In Kitab Al-Jihad of Sahih Al-Bukhari, it is narrated that when Allah removed the (danger of the) Persian army from the Romans, Heraclius walked from Hims to Ilya to show his gratitude to Allah. Ibn Ishaq in his book added (and Ahmed narrates similarly) that a carpet covered with fragrant herbs used to be rolled out for him and Heraclius would walk on it. The reason for this is what has been narrated by Al-Tabari and Ibn Abdil-Hakam with different routes (which collectively add strength to the narration) which can be summarized as: that Chosroes (title of Persian ruler) attacked with his armies Heraclius's cities, many of which they destroyed. Then Chosroes, thinking that his army-chief (called Shehr-Baraz, which was either his name or the title for the Persian army chief) was slow in his advance, decided to execute him and make another man, named Farhan chief of the armies. The chief got knowledge of this beforehand and made secret peace with Heraclius and fled away along with the Persian troops. So, Heraclius walked from Hims to Ilya to show his gratitude to Allah.

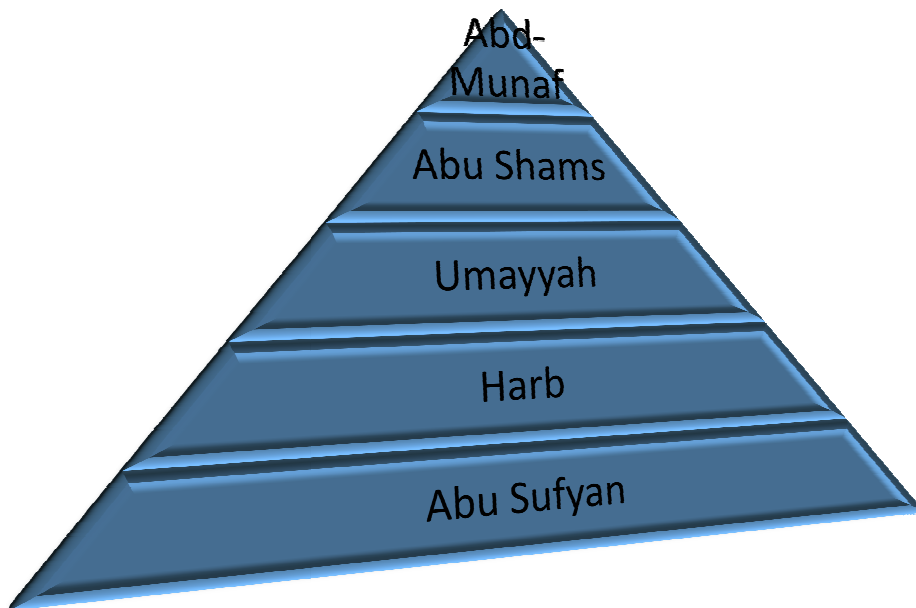
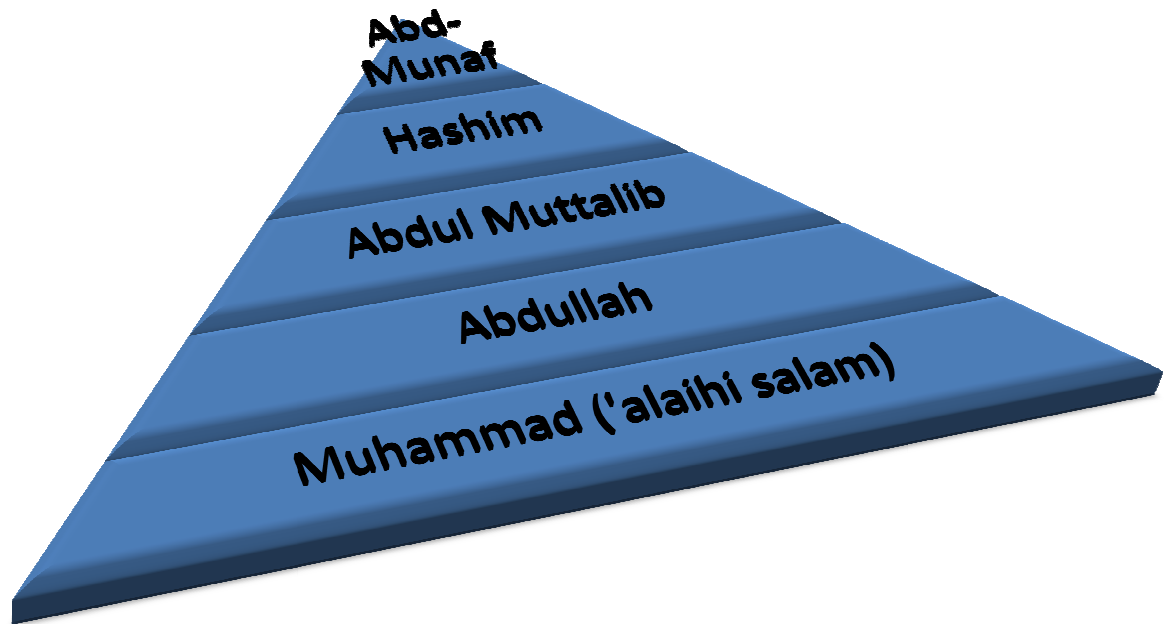
His saying: he had Roman Governors around him

In Kitab Al-Jihad of Sahih Al-Bukhari, it is narrated that, "We entered upon him while he was sitting in his royal court, wearing a crown". In the narration of Ibn Al-Sakan, "he had his state-dignitaries, religious scholars and ascetics (saints) near him". Romans are originally descendants of 'Ees, the son of Prophet Ishaq (Prophet Abraham's grandson), upon both be Blessings of Allah.

His saying: I am the nearest relative to him

In the narration of Ibn Al-Sakan, it is mentioned that other people of the group said, “He (Abu Sufyan) is the most closely related amongst us to him. He is the son of his uncle, his father’s brother.” This is because Abu Sufyan, like the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam, was also from the Banu Abdu-Manaf sub clan of Quraish. It is mentioned in Kitab Al-Jihad in Sahih Al-Bukhari that Heraclius asked, “How is he related to you?” Abu Sufyan replied, “He is my paternal uncle’s son”, and added “There was no one in the group that day who was from Banu Abdu-Manaf, except me.”

Abdu-Manaf is the 4th ancestor of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam and also the 4th ancestor of Abu Sufyan. The Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam’s and Abu Sufyan’s lineages are:



So, actually it's their respective grandfathers (Abdul Muttalib and Umayyah) who are to each other "son of paternal uncle".

So, Heraclius chose a close relative, as he was more likely to have more

information about the private and public affairs of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam. Another reason was that a far-off relative could not be trusted not to (falsely) speak ill of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam's lineage (as a close relative speaking ill of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam's family-status, would inherently be speaking ill of his own family).

Heraclius said, "...who claims to be a Prophet," and such speech usually shows doubt on the part of the speaker (i.e. he was not sure of his prophethood).

His saying: let his companions come forward and make them stand behind his back

This was done so that they would not feel embarrassed to contradict Abu Sufyan if he lied, as is explicit in the narration of Al-Waqidi (there are more than one narrators of this name).

His saying: By Allah! Had I not been afraid of my companions reporting me having lied

This is evidence that they (Quraish or Arabs) used to think that telling lies was un-chivalrous, either taking it from the earlier Divine law or as lying being against their customs. He did not say "Had I not been afraid that they would contradict me," since he trusted that they will not do so if he lied, because of the enmity for the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam that he shared with them. He did not lie out of shame that, if anyone heard about it, they would think him a liar. This is explicit in the narration of Ibn Ishaq, where he said "By Allah! Had I lied, they would not have contradicted me, but I was a chief (amongst them), consciously avoiding lying out of nobility. I knew that it was very likely that if I lied to him, they would remember it and repeat the incident elsewhere, so I (decided that) will not lie to him." Ibn Ishaq added in his narration: Abu Sufyan said: "By Allah! I have never seen a more cunning man than that un-circumcised man (i.e. Heraclius, since Romans did not practice circumcision)!"

Heraclius said: 'Has anybody amongst you ever claimed the same (i.e. to be a Prophet) before him?'

Here “amongst you” means ‘from your people i.e. Quraish or Arabs’.

Heraclius said: 'Do the nobles follow him?'

In Abu Sufyan’s answer to this question, ‘nobles’ means the people of arrogance and pomp from the Qurashi nobility, not every noble. This is because people like Abu Bakr and ‘Umar bin Khattaab were from the Qurashi nobility. In Ibn Ishaq’s narration, Abu Sufyan replied, “The weak and the poor amongst us follow him. As for the people of high family status and nobility, then none of them follow him”. In this case, ‘nobles’ may mean that the majority of the noble class does not follow him.

Heraclius said: 'Does anybody amongst those who embrace his religion become displeased with the religion and renounce it?'

This means that the question does not cover those who reneged from Islam by being forced to do so by the disbelievers. Or the one who left Islam due to worldly greed, like what happened in the case of ‘Ubaidullah bin Jahsh.

Heraclius said: 'Have you ever accused him of telling lies?'

i.e. telling lies about people.

Abu Sufyan: 'I could not find opportunity to insert anything (against the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam) except that.'

i.e. the opportunity to say anything to dent his character. This is apart from the fact that they knew from their experience of the past life of the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasalam that he never betrayed. Abu Sufyan said: “We are at truce with him but we do not know what he will do in it” to weaken his

character. He said it with much doubt and about a thing which was in the unforeseen future so that those present could not ascribe it as a lie from him. Ibn Ishaq narrates that Abu Sufyan said, “By Allah, he (Heraclius) did not pay any attention to this”.

Heraclius said, 'What does he order you to do?'

This shows that a Prophet's status entails him commanding his people.

Abu Sufyan said: “He tells us to worship Allah alone and not to worship anything along with Him, and to renounce all that our ancestors had said. He orders us to pray (perform Salaah), to speak the truth, to be chaste and to keep up the ties with our relatives.”

“Renounce what your ancestors had said” is an all encompassing command to leave every thing that they used to do in the pre-Islamic days. Abu Sufyan mentioned this specifically to gain Heraclius's sympathies, because blindly following the forefathers was the common reason for polytheism between the idol-worshippers of Mecca and the Roman Christians.

In another narration in Sahih Al-Bukhari, the words “He orders us to pray and to speak the truth” are replaced by “to pray and give charity (sadaqah)” and in yet another narration in Sahih Al-Bukhari by “to pray and to give obligatory alms (zakaah)”. All three words are combined in another narration in Kitaab Al-Jihad in Sahih Al-Bukhari as: “He orders us to pray, to speak the truth and to give charity (sadaqah)”.

Heraclius said: I asked you about his family...In fact all the Prophets come from noble families amongst their respective peoples.

He said this with conviction which shows that this reply was based upon definite knowledge he had from the previous scriptures.

Heraclius said: I questioned you whether anybody else amongst you claimed such a thing....If the answer had been in the affirmative, I

would have thought that this man was following the previous man's statement. Then I asked you whether anyone of his ancestors was a king.... if it had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man wanted to take back his ancestral kingdom.

Since these statements were based upon Heraclius's personal observations and deductions, he said them with less surety than his earlier statement(which was based upon the previous scriptures).

Heraclius said: I then asked you whether the noble people followed him or the weak. You replied that it was the weak who followed him. And in fact all the Prophets have been followed by this very class of people.

That is the majority of the followers of prophets are people who show humility and not the arrogant ones who oppose the truth out of bigotry and jealousy, like Abu Jahl and his party.

Heraclius said: I asked you whether his followers were increasing or decreasing. You replied that they were increasing, and in fact such is the way of true faith, till it is complete in all respects.

i.e. true faith (Eeman) begins as a light which keeps increasing until it is complete in all respects like prayers (salaah), charity (zakaah), fasting etc. That is why Allah said in the final years of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam, "This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you" (5:3) and similarly Allah said "Allah will not allow except that His Light should be perfected" (9:92). And this is what happened with the companions of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam: they kept increasing until they were blessed with the completion of Allah's Favour and victory of Islam, may Allah be praised for that.

Heraclius said: I asked you whether there was anybody, who, after embracing his religion, became displeased with his religion and

discarded his religion. Your reply was in the negative, and in fact this is (the sign of) true faith, when its delight enters the hearts and mixes with them completely.

In the Book of Faith in Sahih Al-Bukhari, Heraclius is reported as saying: “When its delight enters the heart and mixes with them completely, nobody can be displeased with it.”. In Ibn Ishaq’s narration, Heraclius said, “Such is the sweetness of faith. This sweetness does not enter a heart and then leaves it.”

Heraclius said: "...the Apostles (of Allah) never betray"

This is because they do not desire worldly gains. A person whose aim is worldly gains only, then betrayal is a light matter for him, as opposed to the one who desires the reward of the hereafter. And this is the reason why he paid no attention to Abu Sufyan’s saying: “We are at truce with him but we do not know what he will do in it”, as we explained earlier.

Note: About Questions No. 10 & 11

In this narration of the event, Heraclius’s explanation to Abu Sufyan’s responses to his 10th ('Have you ever had a war with him?') and 11th question ('What was the outcome of the battles?') are not mentioned. However they are explained in the Book of Jihad in Sahih Al-Bukhari, where the narration is “Heraclius said, "I asked you about the outcome of your battles with him and you told me that you fought each other with alternate success. So the Apostles are tested in this way but the ultimate victory is always theirs.”

I (Ibn Hajr, the author) will give my explanation of this part in the Book of Jihad of Sahih Al-Bukhari.

Another Note

These things that Heraclius asked are not enough to prove the prophethood of a person. However as Heraclius himself said later, “I knew it that he was

going to appear but I did not expect that he would be from you”, this means that he already had signs about the emergence Prophet Muhammad sallallahu alaihi wasallam.

Heraclius said: “ (The Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam) forbade you to worship idols”

However, Abu Sufyan had only said “He tells us to worship Allah alone and not to worship anything along with Him, and to renounce all that our ancestors had said”. Since their ancestors had asked them to worship idols, hence this is what Heraclius deduced.

Heraclius said: “If what you have said is true, he will very soon occupy this place underneath my feet”

i.e. either Bait Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), since that was the place from where the stability of his kingdom emanated [Jerusalem is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims. Since his subjects were Christians, having it as part of his kingdom lent stability to his kingdom]. Or he meant the whole of Al-Shaam (area comprising present-day Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan), because Hims (Homs, in present day Syria) was his capital, which is in Al-Shaam.

Heraclius said: “if I knew I could reach him, I would go out of my way to meet him”

This is proof that Heraclius believed that he would have been killed had he emigrated to the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam, as happened in the case of Dhughatir (which will be mentioned in detail later) who openly embraced Islam and was killed by the Romans due to that. Al-Tabarani narrated with a weak route from ‘Abdullah Bin Shaddad who narrated from Dihya this event briefly, wherein Heraclius is reported to have said: “I know that he is like that (i.e. a prophet), but I cannot do it (profess my Islam). If I do that, I will lose my kingdom and the Romans will kill me”. However, had Heraclius correctly understood the saying of the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam “if you become a Muslim you will be safe” to mean safety in this world and the

hereafter, he would have been safe from everything he feared, had he become a Muslim. However, the guidance (to do good) is in the Hand of Allah.

Heraclius said: "If I were with him, I would certainly wash his feet"

i.e. extreme humility and servitude. Abdullah Bin Shaddad in his narration from Abu Sufyan added "If I knew that he is really him (the awaited prophet), I would have walked (all the way) to him till I am able to kiss his head and wash his feet". This shows that he was still in some doubt. In the same narration, it is mentioned "And indeed I saw his (Heraclius's) forehead dripping with perspiration from the hardship of (having) the letter (read to him)". Since Heraclius did not add anything to his desire of "washing his feet", it shows that had he reached the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam safely, he would not have sought any authority or rank; he would only have sought blessing from the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam.

What gives strength to the notion that Heraclius preferred his kingdom over embracing Islam and continued in his state of misguidance are the following evidences:

1. Within two years of this event, he fought the Muslims in the Battle of Mu'tah in the 8th year of the Hijrah calendar. In Al-Maghazi by Ibn Ishaq it is narrated that, when the Muslims reached Ma'an (in present day Jordan) in Al-Shaam, they got the news that Heraclius too has reached with a hundred thousand of the polytheists (soldiers; to fight the Muslims).
2. Similarly in Sahih Ibn Hibban it is narrated that the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam wrote a letter to him from Tabook too, inviting him to Islam. He came near to accepting it, but did not reply.
3. Though the above evidences apparently mean that he continued to be a non-Muslim, however, it is possible to think that he embraced Islam but concealed his faith and did all these sins (such as fighting the Muslims) to save his rule and his life from his people. However this is contradicted by the narration in Musnad Ahmed, that he wrote to the Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam from Tabook, "I am a Muslim". The Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam said, "He lied; instead he is still upon his Christianity (i.e. Christian faith)."

This is why the author of Al-Istee'aab (i.e. *Al-Istee'aab fi Tamyeez Al-As-haab* by Abu 'Umar Ibn Abdul Barr, died 463 H) said that Heraclius embraced Islam, but did not continue being a Muslim and did not act upon what Islam requires of its adherents. Instead he was greedy for his kingdom and preferred the world that is going to end one day over the never-ending hereafter. However, the guidance (to do good) is with Allah.

Abu Sufyan said: Heraclius then asked for the letter sent by Allah's Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam which was delivered by Dihya to the Governor of Busra, who forwarded it to Heraclius.

Dihya bin Khaleefah Al-Kalbi was a great companion of the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam, who embraced Islam at a very early stage. He had a beautiful face and died during the caliphate of Mu'aawiyah, may Allah be Pleased with them all. The Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam after returning from Al-Hudaibya sent him with his letter to Heraclius at the end of 6 H (i.e. the sixth year after the migration to Medina). He reached Heraclius in Al-Muharram (the first month of the Islamic Calendar) of 7 H.

Busra is a city between Medina and Damascus (not the present day Basra in modern day Iraq). The Governor of Busra was Al-Harith bin Shamir Al-Ghassani, who died in the year of the conquest of Mecca. In "Al-Sahabah" by Ibn Al-Sakan, it is mentioned that the Governor of Busra forwarded the letter to Heraclius, and sent along with it 'Adi bin Hatim, who was a Christian at the time. Hence 'Adi and Dihya reached Heraclius together. It is mentioned in the Musnad of Al-Bazzar that Dihya himself handed over the letter to Heraclius.

The letter said: "Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. From Muhammad....

The majority of scholars say that it is a Sunnah to start a letter with one's own name. It is also narrated that when Heraclius was presented with the letter, his brother's son was also present. This nephew, when he read the letter, made fun of it and said, "Don't read it, because he started the letter with his own name". However, Heraclius emphatically rejected this suggestion.

The letter said: "To Heraclius, the ruler of the Romans".

The Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam avoided addressing him as "King", because Islamic law inherently deposes an un-believing king from his

kingdom [as such is only befitting to those who obey Allah]. However, he did not deprive him of all respect, in order to soften his heart for Islam. In some narrations, it is mentioned that Heraclius's nephew objected to this too, that the Prophet sallallahu alaiwasalam did not say "the King of Romans".

The letter said: "Peace be upon him, who follows the guidance (to the right path)".

This has also been narrated in the story of Musa and Haroon, 'alaihima al-salaam with Fur'awn (Pharaoh) in the Quraan: "...indeed, we have come with a sign from your Lord! And peace will be upon him who follows the guidance! (Ta-Ha 20:47)".

If it is asked, how can an un-believer be greeted with the Islamic greeting of Salaam, then the answer is that mufasssiroon (scholars who explain the meanings of the words of the Quraan) said: "Here it is not intended as a greeting, but it means 'The one who accepts Islam, is saved from the torment of Allah.' That is why the verse above is immediately followed by: "Truly, it has been revealed to us that the torment will be for him who denies [believes not in Islam], and turns away (from the truth and obedience of Allah)" (Ta-Ha 20:48)"

Similarly, later in this letter, it is mentioned that "if you reject this (invitation of Islam) you will also carry the sin (of misguiding your) subjects." And since Heraclius did not "follow the guidance (to the right path)," he [has no peace from the torment of Allah].

The letter said: "I invite you to Islam. Embrace Islam and you will be safe; Allah will double your reward"

i.e. I invite you to testify that there is no deity worthy of being worshipped except Allah and Muhammad sallallahu alaihiwasallam is His Prophet. In the Book of Jihad in Sahih Al-Bukhari, the author has narrated that the letter said: "Embrace Islam, embrace Islam; your reward will be doubled." The command to embrace Islam was repeated possibly for emphasis. Or possibly, the first "Embrace Islam" was the command to enter Islam and the second "Embrace Islam" was the command to remain steadfast in that, like Allah said in the Quraan, "O you who believe! Believe in Allah, and His Messenger...." (Al-Nisaa 4:136).

The letter said: "Allah will double your reward"

This is in accordance with what Allah said in the Quraan “Those to whom We gave the Scripture before it, - they believe in it (the Quraan). And when it is recited to them, they say: "We believe in it. Verily, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed even before it we have been from those who submit themselves to Allâh in Islâm as Muslims. These will be given their reward twice over, because they are patient, and repel evil with good, and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them.” (Al-Qisas 28:52-54). He would have received a double reward possibly due to the fact that he already believed in his own Prophet (Jesus ‘alaihi salam) and would have then believed in the Prophet Muhammad sallallahualaihiwasallam. And it is also possible that the double award would have been due to himself becoming a Muslim and then leading his subjects to Islam by his example. This latter possibility will be clearly expounded in the hadith of Al-Shi’bi in the Book of Knowledge in Sahih Al-Bukhai, which we will explain when we come to it, Insha’ Allah.

Our Sheikh used this hadith to derive the ruling that whoever believes in the religion of the People of the Scripture (i.e. Judaism or Christianity) is to be counted as one of them in (everything, including) the legal rulings of marriage with them and eating their slaughtered animals. This is because Heraclius and his people (the Romans) were not from Banu Israel (or Children of Israel i.e. Jacob [Ya’qoob] ‘alaihi salam). Instead they had accepted Christianity after it had been corrupted and distorted [by pagan and heretical beliefs and practices, to the extent that it bore little semblance to the original monotheistic message of Jesus Christ, ‘alahi salam]. But despite this, the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam addressed them as ‘O people of the Scripture...’ which shows that they are to be counted as such. This negates the notion that ‘People of the Scripture’ is a term specific to the Children of Israel or to those whose ancestors embraced Christianity before its distortion. And Allah Knows best.

The letter said: “...and if you reject this (invitation of Islam) you will carry the sin of (misguiding your) subjects”

In the original Arabic the word used is ‘upon you would be the sin of the farmers’, but as the scholars pointed out, ‘farmers’ here is an expression used to mean ‘subjects of the kingdom’ or ‘the weak, who follow those higher in status and power’. This means that ‘you will carry along with your sin, the sin of the subjects’. This has no contradiction to the verse of the Quraan “No one laden with burdens can bear another's burden.” (Al-Israa

17:15), because the sin of the sinner himself will be carried by no-one except himself. However, the who sins himself, misleads others and causes them to sin, is held accountable on two charges: on the one hand for the act of doing the actual sinful act and on the other hand of causing others to sin as well.

The letter said: “ And (Allah said in the Quraan): 'O people of the scripture! Come to a word common to you and us that we worship none but Allah and that we associate nothing in worship with Him, and that none of us shall take others as Lords beside Allah. Then, if they turn away, say: Bear witness that we are Muslims (those who have surrendered to Allah).' (3:64).

The ‘And’ here, before the verse of the Quraan, is significant. It could imply that it is a continuation of the previous contents of the letter, as if the author of the letter, sallallahualaihiwasallam wished to say: ‘I invite you to Islam, and I say to you and your followers in accordance with the saying of Allah ‘O people of the scripture! Come to a word..... (3:64) ’.

It is also possible that this ‘and’ is not from the letter at all. It may well be Abu Sufyan’s own word, as he maynot have remembered all the contents of the letter. He merely remembered the first part of the letter and reproduced it, and similarly he remembered the verse to be part of the letter and reproduced it, as if he was saying: ‘The letter said ‘Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. From Muhammad....’ and it also contained ‘O people of the Scripture! Come to a word....’ ’. In that case the ‘and’ was from the speech of Abu Sufyan and not from the letter itself! [I say this is a tremendous example how the Muslim scholars went to great intellectual lengths to make sure that every single syllable and word ascribed to the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam is authentically ascribed to him and that not even a simple ‘and’ is ascribed to him erroneously]

It is also said that the Prophet sallallahualaihiwasallam wrote the letter before the verse was revealed in the Quraan, and so when it was revealed, it matched the words of the letter. The reason behind this is that this verse was revealed in the incident of the delegation of the Christians of Najraan, and this happened during the ‘Year of the Delegations’ i.e. 9 Hijri. And this incident with Heraclius occurred before this during the year 6 Hijri. This will be shown clearly when we reach the Book of Military Expeditions (Al-Maghazi) in Sahih Al-Bukhari.

It is also said that the verse was actually revealed in the beginning of the

Hijri calendar, as is implied in what Imam Ibn Ishaq said. Some scholars said that the verse was actually revealed twice, but that is far-fetched.

To be continued....